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ABSTRACT

With the advent of the National Education Goals formulated by President Bush and the nation's governors, there is a new, nationwide environment for America's schools. Goals and objectives set at this new level imply a desire for involvement in national monitoring of local efforts to assess student, school, and district performance. Concerned about school board response to the National Education Goals, the National School Boards Association and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement jointly sponsored a study group to examine why National Education Goals are being promulgated now, why they are important for local school boards, and what school boards can do to support the goals. The study group developed several general principles to apply to each goal. Essentially, the study group urges school boards to: (1) consider the National Education Goals a framework for discussing local educational improvement efforts; (2) recognize that the goals redefine board responsibilities to include advocacy for children and learning; (3) demonstrate the school board's leadership in deciding which community group has primary responsibility for achieving each goal; and (4) prepare to cooperate with community members to change the framework for strategic thinking about education. The study group also offers a framework for considering each goal at the local level and outlines ideal board responses to each of 21 objectives established for the goals. (MLH)

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National Education Goals

America's School Boards Respond

A Report of the Joint Study Group on the National Education Goals

April 1992

U.S. Department of Education
Lamar Alexander
Secretary

Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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Executive Summary

A new national climate for education and a new type of discourse shape American education today. The changes are most evident in the development of the National Education Goals by the President and the nation's governors. Goals and objectives set at that level imply a desire to be involved in some national monitoring as well, a process likely to affect local accountability and autonomy in assessing student, school, and school system performance.

Converting the National Education Goals into local action will require the commitment of thousands of local school board members and of all agencies that serve children, youth, and their families. Beyond commitment, alert and aggressive leadership will be needed to tackle communitywide issues and to coordinate the efforts of all segments of society and our communities to achieve those goals.

With a common concern for how school boards will respond to the National Education Goals, the National School Boards Association and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education jointly sponsored a Study Group to look into that response. The group examined the effects of national goals on local school districts, especially the board members' role in leading community response to the goals.

The Study Group's analyses centered on three core questions:

1. **Why are National Education Goals being promulgated now?**
2. **Why are National Education Goals important for local school boards?**
3. **What can school boards do to support the National Education Goals?**

In working through the questions, the group developed several general principles which they then applied to each goal. Essentially, the Study Group urges school boards to

- Consider the National Education Goals as a framework for discussing local efforts to improve education;
- Recognize that the goals go beyond the traditional responsibilities of most school boards, placing new emphasis on their roles as advocates for children and learning;
- Demonstrate the school board's leadership in developing a clear understanding of who in the community has primary responsibility for achieving each goal and how various organizations can work together on community concerns; and
- Prepare to work in new ways with others in the community to change the framework for strategic thinking about education.

The Study Group also offers a framework for considering each goal at the local level and outlines what is required—and the role the school board can play—in responding to each of the 21 objectives established for the goals.

Preface

For the first time in American history, in February 1990, the President of the United States and 50 state governors set six National Education Goals. From preparing all children to start school ready to learn, to equipping every adult with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, the goals set ambitious targets for the nation to reach by the year 2000.

Since then, people from all walks of life—business, labor, and community leaders; legislators; journalists; parents; teachers; and students—have accepted that challenge with enthusiasm and set out to do their part in making our education system second to none in what it offers and in the results it produces. Our school board members, as local officials elected to govern America's 15,000 school districts, have been among those who responded most actively to the opportunities that challenge offers—opportunities to lead their communities in rethinking the aspirations and the achievements of their districts.

For many school boards, the National Education Goals provide a base from which to chart a new course for their school system. With extensive community involvement, these school boards are rethinking their expectations for student achievement, staff performance, and for their own leadership. They can set their sights on ever higher levels of attainment, aiming to bring their schools to the point where they can meet the world class standards considered by the National Council on Education Standards and Testing.

This report was prepared as a joint effort of the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and the U.S. Department of Education. The observations reported in *America's School Boards Respond* grew out of a series of three two-day meetings of a Study Group on the National Education Goals. The Study Group consisted of school board representatives from seven states—California, Colorado, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, New York, and South Carolina—as well as staff members from the National School Boards Association, the National Governors' Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the U.S. Department of Education. The focus of much of the Study Group's work was on how the goals should be reflected in the thinking of local school board members and in the work of local boards.

America's School Boards Respond looks at the role of the school board in responding to the National Education Goals at two levels. First, it presents the goals along with background information designed to answer board members' questions about the goals and their development. Second, it identifies actions needed to attain the goals and the roles school boards may take with respect to advocacy, leadership, and collaboration. Examples of ways school districts have already begun to implement the goals are also presented.

In this report, the Study Group seeks to encourage and support the efforts of school board members to consider the goals as part of the basic framework of their responsibilities and to act on them as quickly as possible. At the same time, it urges national policymakers to "stay the course"—that is, to continue their emphasis on these six National Education Goals while local initiatives develop without substantially altering them or adding new goals in ensuing years.

In their analysis of the relationship of the goals to the local school board, Study Group participants expressly followed the lead of the 1989 Education Summit and the National Education Goals Panel in emphasizing that these are goals for the year 2000. The Study Group recognizes that it will take both time and effort to achieve these goals.

Kristen Amundson of KJA Communications prepared the final version of this report, with the assistance and guidance of NSBA and OERI representatives Charles Haughey, Michael Resnick, Martharose Laffey, and Dorothy Clarke. This group bears primary responsibility for the section of the report that addresses what is needed to meet the National Education Goals.

While this report was in preparation, President George Bush launched **AMERICA 2000**, a long-term strategy to help move the nation toward the six National Education Goals, community by community and school by school. *AMERICA 2000: An Education Strategy* and *AMERICA 2000 Communities: Getting Started*, both Department of Education publications, contain a number of ideas that America's school boards can use as they develop their own response to the National Education Goals.

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Introduction

Think about every problem, every challenge we face. The solution to each starts with education. For the sake of the future, of our children and the nation's, we must transform America's schools. The days of the status quo are over.

George Bush, April 18, 1991

With the advent of the National Education Goals, there is a new, nationwide environment for America's schools. New values are being applied and a new language is being used to discuss education issues. A nation whose education systems were established by individual states with strong reliance on local control is now contemplating national goals and national exams. Traditional principles of local accountability and school district autonomy are being re-examined in light of national or state programs to assess and report on the performance of students, schools, and school systems.

Even within local communities, familiar landmarks are changing. Families and churches, prime socializing influences on children, play more limited roles in their lives today. Social and education programs to bolster positive family and community influences seem to have diminishing power to counter the effects of economic and social deprivation. In fact, the environment in which school boards operate has changed in many places. On a nationwide scale one of the strongest indications of those changes is the National Education Goals—a first-ever national consensus agenda that expresses a vision of what the country will need to do to prepare our children for the 21st century.

The National Education Goals were promulgated at the highest executive levels of government—by the President of the United States and the nation's governors. However, despite their lofty origins, the goals must be put into practice community by community, school by school. Achieving the National Education Goals will require the commitment of thousands of local school board members and all agencies that serve children, youth, and their families. More than commitment, local implementation of the goals will require enlightened school board leadership in developing policies and in carrying out the programs the goals require.

Clearly, local school boards are recognized by their communities as key decisionmakers in improving education. The National Education Goals offer school boards an unprecedented opportunity for local leadership by focusing attention on the myriad of issues that affect children's school performance and on the people who are responsible for addressing those issues.

The urgent need for alert and aggressive leadership in tackling the communitywide issues is the immediate and overwhelming message of the school boards association members who served on the Study Group that developed this publication.

One theme recurred throughout the Study Group discussions and runs throughout this report: the essential need for coordinated efforts by everyone in all of our society and in each of our communities if we are to achieve the National Education Goals by the year 2000.

Children are not just students—they spend 18 hours a day outside of school. The conditions many of them face when they leave the classroom are often far less than ideal and are often far different from conditions faced by earlier generations. Today's children live with changing family structures; a reduction in the time many parents spend with their children; and the social problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse, poverty, and limited access to health care. All of these factors have a significant impact on a child's ability to learn. Thus, it is not enough for school districts to be committed to achieving the National Education Goals. Unless our schools engage the interests and efforts of parents, businesses, social service organizations, and others concerned about our nation's next generation, the National Education Goals cannot be achieved.

The National Education Goals

By the year 2000:

1. **Readiness for School**. All children in America will start school ready to learn.

2. **High School Completion**. The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

3. **Student Achievement and Citizenship**. American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

4. **Science and Mathematics**. U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

5. **Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning**. Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

6. **Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools**. Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

About the National Education Goals

Given our country's long tradition of state responsibility and local control of public education, it is not surprising that the announcement of the National Education Goals evokes rather direct questions from school board members. Many of their questions focus on the origins of these goals. They ask three questions:

Q. Why are National Education Goals being promulgated now?

A. The six National Education Goals are a product of concerns about education shared by America's top leadership, the President and the governors. These goals, together with their objectives, represent the consensus of our leaders' judgment about what needs to be accomplished in education.

These are truly national goals in the sense that they are to be achieved across state boundaries and without regard for regional and local loyalties. They constitute a new standard for the minimally acceptable performance of all schools and school systems and lead us toward new sets of achievement standards for all students.

Announcing the goals at this time reflects the maturation of a still-growing political consensus that American schools must establish clear standards of performance to which all students will be held. In part, this is based on a broad, new acceptance of the idea that our nation's continued prosperity requires an increasingly educated work force.

Today, a new standard for an educated citizenry is required, one suitable for the next century. Our people must be as knowledgeable, as well-trained, as competent, and as inventive as those in any other nation. All of our people, not just a few, must be able to think for a living, adapt to changing environments, and to understand the world around them.

National Education Goals fact sheet,
released by the White House, February 26, 1990

The goals also reflect an updated approach to improving education. In the past, discussions about education often focused on what economists call *inputs* (e.g., teacher salaries, the number of books in the school library). Today, the discussion deals with *outcomes* (what students should know and are able to do).

Evidently, these national goals have come along at an appropriate time, because their effect on states has been direct and fast-moving. Since they were announced, 43 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and more than 1,100 communities are mobilizing **AMERICA 2000** initiatives to reach the National Education Goals.

Q. Why are the National Education Goals important for local school boards?

A. There are at least three reasons why these goals are important for local school boards. First, the National Education Goals offer school boards an unprecedented opportunity to exert leadership to improve the education of all children in their communities.

The goals come at a time when changing community demographics, along with other factors such as increasingly constrained resources and new pressures for community involvement in decisionmaking, have stimulated school boards to rethink their role. The National Education Goals can serve to focus and reinforce positive efforts toward change.

In the broader scope of a local community, the attainment of national goals will require a new melding of community programs and resources and will call for renewed involvement of various government, business, and community organizations. Because the school board will be particularly accountable for meeting these goals, it must become well-positioned to take a lead to marshal and direct the resources to attain them.

In these circumstances, the National Education Goals give the local school board the opportunity to revitalize school reform at the local level. Using the national goals as a starting point, local boards can raise the community's sights to:

- Redefine the expectations within which schools operate by reviewing and updating local goals and objectives;
- Establish a structural framework for school improvement, including evaluating school district policies, ensuring that the budget reflects current priorities, and putting assessment and accountability processes in place;
- Serve as an advocate for children and schools; and
- Seek increased local flexibility from state requirements which constrain achievement as they increase regulations imposed on schools.

When establishing the goals, the President and the governors explicitly recognized that schools that could meet ambitious performance goals should face fewer state requirements. In practice, this belief has led many states to grant local school districts the authority to apply for waivers from state regulations as part of a comprehensive program for school improvement.

Second, the National Education Goals provide school boards with a fresh start in their efforts to involve everyone in the community in improving education for all children.

Local school boards will play the critical role in determining whether or not the goals are to be achieved. They can use the goals, and their own local goal-setting, as a mechanism to focus public attention on and to increase support for schools and other programs serving children.

As community leaders, local school board members should be advocates for community involvement in improving student achievement. School boards can deliver the following message:

> **All citizens will benefit if the National Education Goals (as well as locally developed goals) are achieved; all citizens have a responsibility to see that they are achieved.**

By working together with other agencies, local school boards can leverage their impact on all programs that serve children, youth, and their families.

Third, the National Education Goals are likely to set the stage for the development of performance standards in every agency serving children and youth during the next decade.

It is clear that both the President and the governors intend to develop a report card for education based on a national reporting system that assesses progress toward meeting the goals. In fact, the National Education Goals Panel, the group charged by the President and the governors with devising the progress report system, has already developed a series of performance measures for its 1991 report card, which was released on September 30, 1991. Although the Panel noted many areas where no data are now available, its report clearly indicates that some sort of national reporting system is on the horizon.

Q. What can school boards do to support the National Education Goals?

A. There is considerable—and growing—public support for the National Education Goals. The 1990 and 1991 Gallup polls on American education found that more than three-quarters of those surveyed attach "very high" or "high" priority to all six of the National Education Goals. Clearly, the goals have public support.

Gallup Poll results, by priority assigned to each goal: 1991 and (1990)

	(Percent)				
Goal	Very high	High	Low	Very low	Don't know
1 (Readiness)	52 (44)	38 (44)	6 (6)	1 (2)	3 (4)
2 (Completion)	54 (45)	37 (42)	5 (8)	1 (1)	3 (4)
3 (Achievement)	55 (46)	35 (42)	6 (7)	1 (2)	3 (3)
4 (Math & science)	43 (34)	41 (42)	11 (16)	2 (3)	3 (5)
5 (Adult literacy)	50 (45)	36 (37)	9 (11)	2 (3)	3 (4)
6 (Safe, drug-free schools)	63 (55)	23 (26)	6 (9)	5 (6)	3 (4)

SOURCE: Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 1990 and September 1991.

Each goal demands different responses from the local school board. These National Education Goals provide school boards with new opportunities to be seen as the leaders in initiating a dialog among all community service providers. Out of that dialog can come a clearer understanding of who has primary responsibility for achieving each of the goals—and how service delivery systems can be coordinated to respond to common concerns.

Although the National Education Goals reach well beyond the scope of any single local school board member's responsibilities, local school board members can contribute substantially to their implementation. The Study Group recommends that local school board members expand three dimensions of their customary roles by:

- Aggressive **advocacy** for the educational welfare of all children;
- Asserting their **leadership** in improving all aspects of education provided within their community; and
- Fostering **collaboration** of all elements of the school system in communitywide initiatives to strengthen the environments that nurture children.

Advocacy. Some of the national goals deal with issues that have not always been considered part of a school board's traditional area of responsibility. For example, Goal 1 (school readiness) and Goal 5 (adult literacy and lifelong learning) will require the school board to play an advocacy role. School board members should show concern for readiness as community leaders and as advocates for the critical importance of meeting the needs of young children. With respect to both goals, school boards will need to become ever more visible in their community on behalf of improved education for all people even though direct actions to address these two goals may involve many community resources beyond the school system.

Board members should consider advocacy *within* the system, fostering innovation and encouraging collaboration with other agencies, as well as *outside* the system. Imagine the impact on other local government agencies if, for example, school board members testified not only for increased school spending but also for improved health care or nutrition for children. At the same time, imagine the impact on education achievement if every child arrived in school adequately fed and without any health problems.

Leadership. Attaining the two academic achievement goals (Goals 3 and 4) is likely to remain the responsibility of the local school board almost exclusively. Here the board's leadership role will be critical for setting and meeting enhanced expectations.

In the coming decade, school boards will need to exercise visionary leadership, fostering innovative programs to respond to the changing needs of students. In particular, local boards will increasingly be able to consider local policy in the context of the National Education Goals, aspire to local progress in setting expanded national horizons for education, and assess local performance in terms of nationwide patterns of achievement. Boards may, for example, require new curricula, new instructional methodologies, programs to improve teachers' skills, new methods of assessing student progress, and new ways of training and supporting professional staff. At the same time, boards will rely on both renewed commitment and better coordination of efforts at all levels of government and from the private sector.

Collaboration. Schools are neither professionally nor financially equipped to meet all of the National Education Goals by themselves. For example, it will be impossible to achieve the goal of safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools (Goal 6) without involving local law enforcement authorities, parents, and others in the community. To achieve this goal, school boards might take part in a communitywide task force to review policies on drug abuse and discipline or to outline expectations for students and teachers.

Collaboration will be required to accomplish the other goals as well. In a time of static or declining public budgets, collaboration

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offers the opportunity to provide improved services by maximizing efficiency and effectiveness. By reaching out to involve businesses, community organizations, parents, and other agencies, schools can more effectively meet the needs of today's students. (See "What is Needed to Meet the National Education Goals" for specific suggestions on how school boards can collaborate with others to achieve the goals.)

Not only will new people need to become involved in education, but they will need to work together in new ways. The National Education Goals give local school districts the chance to change public attitudes about education, focusing on the idea that education is not solely the responsibility of the public schools but a communitywide concern that requires the active participation of everyone.

The goals themselves are interrelated. For example, it is more than difficult to meet Goal 3 (achievement) if schools are not safe and drug free (Goal 6), or if students do not come to school ready to learn (Goal 1). It is also difficult to reduce the dropout rate (Goal 2) if there are not significant efforts to improve programs for adult literacy and lifelong learning (Goal 5). Collaboration among agencies, organizations, and individuals is critical.

In many states and communities, organizations have used the National Education Goals as a framework for discussing local efforts to improve education. Colorado, California, Indiana, and Washington are among the states that have already launched statewide efforts to discuss how agencies can work together to achieve the goals.

Readiness: An Example of Collaboration

A National School Boards Association publication, *Ready to Learn: Early Childhood Education and the Public Schools*, outlined some of the ways school boards can be part of a comprehensive effort to achieve the first goal:

> An important role for today's school board is building bridges between the school and those community groups and agencies that play a role or have an interest in providing for children and families. School boards should join with other providers serving young children and families, as well as other stakeholders such as the business community and parent representatives—taking the leadership in forming such a council if necessary. This communitywide planning council should do the following:
>
> - Specify the array of services that young children and their families should receive.
> - Assess the community with respect to providing these services, that is, conduct a thorough needs assessment.
> - Establish priorities in the needs that are not being met effectively.
> - Discuss who can do what, identifying community resources and additional funding sources.
> - Develop a coordinated action plan.
> - Communicate the need for staying power—the first results could take 16–18 years.

Building Bridges

One of the first steps school boards can take in raising the sights of their local communities toward the National Education Goals is to determine what other local agencies must be involved in achieving those goals. Certainly, many agencies sponsor programs that affect achievement of the goals. A first step, then, may be to bring together representatives of agencies that serve children, youth, and their families. For example,

- In Merced County, California, the Office of Education coordinates a project for at-risk children and youth. Participants include Board of Supervisors members, county and school district administrators, county department heads and supervisors, law enforcement officers, and community advisory board members. From the project has emerged the Family Advocacy Team, composed of representatives of the school and departments of health, social services, and mental health. The Team intervenes for children and families at risk by providing services that may range from eyeglasses provided by a local service club to drug treatment for a substance-abusing parent.
- In Springfield, Massachusetts, the Alliance for Youth includes the schools and a variety of community agencies interested in collaborative efforts and initiatives on behalf of children and families. Goals of the Alliance include reducing the dropout rate, improving school attendance, advocating for improved child care and early childhood programs, and creating a database that will allow for early identification, tracking, referral, and follow up for children and families.

Get beyond your own system and mobilize your community to improve conditions for children and their families.

Sam Sniderman
Michigan Association of School Boards

How to Meet the National Education Goals

The authors of our National Education Goals acknowledge that the goals are intended to challenge this nation and everyone who is engaged in education. While the weight of that challenge varies from place to place, local school board members are uniquely situated to see just how heavily the nationwide challenge impacts on their own schools. In addressing these goals, few boards, if any, will find that their circumstances match another community's. But even as circumstances differ, there are likely to be similarities in the processes school boards and communities will use to address the challenge presented by the goals.

Q. What general approach should school boards take to the National Education Goals?

A. The Study Group recommends that school boards take the following actions:

- Set their own education goals, watch and evaluate them, and report on the school district's success in meeting them.
- Incorporate national and state goals as a minimum; set the highest goals possible for the community.
- Clarify the school district's role in meeting the National Education Goals and exert local leadership in encouraging other agencies to recognize their responsibilities for meeting the goals.
- Collaborate with community agencies that serve children, youth, and their families to develop and conduct projects that work toward achieving the goals.
- Act as advocates for children and youth in their communities.
- Institute assessment programs that accurately reflect the performance of schools and students in meeting locally and nationally developed goals.

Q. How should a school board approach each goal?

A. In preparing this report, the Study Group found that a common framework provided a productive context for considering each goal. The following pages present that framework on a goal-by-goal basis to facilitate the extensive analysis needed to fit each school system's unique circumstances. Examples of ways that local school boards are already working to achieve each goal are also included.

The Study Group encourages each reader to build on the examples provided of school board roles in relation to the goals and objectives. You may want to use these pages to prepare your own notes for a discussion of how the goals affect your district. The goal-by-goal examples could serve as a discussion guide or outline for school board analysis of how your school district can respond to each goal.

Goal 1: Readiness for School

By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

Objective 1

All disadvantaged and disabled children will have access to high quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school.

Action Needed

1. Identification of the extent to which communities provide disadvantaged and disabled children with developmentally appropriate preschool programs.
2. Community inventories of the resources that could support expanded programs to meet preschool program needs identified.
3. Full funding for Head Start expansion to serve all eligible 3- and 4-year-olds.
4. Expanded business involvement in providing or supporting early childhood education programs for their employees.
5. High quality child care for all families that need it.

Objective 2

Every parent in America will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day to helping his or her preschool child learn; parents will have access to the training and support they need.

Action Needed

1. Nationwide communication or advocacy effort to make parents aware of the critical importance of their role as first teachers.
2. Community collaboration involving churches, health care providers, day care providers, businesses, and schools to ensure that parents have access to the parenting information they need to help their children become successful.

Objective 3

Children will receive the nutrition and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies, and the number of low birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems.

Action Needed

1. Nationwide communication or advocacy effort to make pregnant women aware of the importance of receiving prenatal care.
2. Ready access to prenatal care for all pregnant women.
3. Federal, state, and local government assurance that pregnant women, nursing mothers, and young children receive adequate nutrition.
4. Comprehensive health services provided to all children.
5. Community mechanisms for monitoring the quality and quantity of nutrition and health care available to pregnant women and children.
6. High quality child care for all families that need it.

Examples of School Board's Role

Advocacy

- Recognize the board's role as the community's prime advocate for children and youth, with concern for all aspects of life, especially those that affect educational readiness and achievement.

Leadership

- Consider developing a comprehensive early childhood education program that enhances community efforts.
- Provide child care services and parent training for all school-age parents.

Collaboration

- Join in or provide leadership for communitywide efforts to meet children's needs in the following areas: pregnancy, prenatal and neonatal care; health and nutrition; parenting; safety; child abuse prevention; maternal substance abuse; child care; and preschool programs.

In Baltimore, Maryland. . .

The Baltimore Infants and Toddlers Program is an interagency collaboration that provides a variety of early intervention services to developmentally delayed, disadvantaged children from birth to age three. Public and private agencies throughout the city offer evaluation, assessment, special instruction, health care, social work with families, or occupational and physical therapy to children who need it. Although the school board did not initiate this program, it has provided both staff and resources. Other program members include the Department of Social Services and the Health Department.

Goal 2: High School Completion

By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

Objective 1

The nation must dramatically reduce its dropout rate, and 75 percent of those students who do drop out will successfully complete a high school degree or its equivalent.

Action Needed

1. Assessment by every school of its own attrition problems.
2. Comprehensive programs to prevent teenage pregnancy and to support teen parents when children are born to reduce the effects of parenthood as a major cause of dropouts.
3. Designation of high school completion or continued enrollment as a prerequisite for employment in both the private and public sectors so that school success translates into better opportunity.
4. Appropriate continuing education incentives and opportunities provided by employers for employees who have left school.
5. Communitywide education and advocacy programs on the importance of staying in school.

Objective 2

The gap in high school graduation rates between American students from minority backgrounds and their nonminority counterparts will be eliminated.

Action Needed

1. Assessment of the disparities in attrition between minority students and others.
2. Minority community leadership involvement in addressing specific culturally linked circumstances that lead students to leave school.
3. Increased parent and citizen awareness of the dropout problem and support for communitywide efforts to address it.

Examples of School Board's Role

Advocacy

- Initiate communitywide efforts to assess the local causes of dropouts and to devise approaches to increase school retention and completion.

Leadership

- Provide the resources necessary to coordinate school efforts to accurately assess the extent and nature of the dropout problem.
- Assume the responsibility for developing multifaceted programs to reduce attrition and to provide appropriate school completion opportunities for students whose education has been interrupted.
- Establish a priority for the reduction of disparities, where they exist, in dropout rates between minority students and others.

Collaboration

- Work with the business community to encourage students to remain in school.

In Colorado. . .

In Denver, Colorado, a cooperative program between the school district and the community is designed to ensure that more than 1,000 at-risk high school students graduate. Community volunteers, trained as mentors, meet weekly with certain at-risk students to encourage them to stay in school. In addition, businesses, service clubs, and professional organizations sponsor freshman classes at each of Denver's high schools.

Students who drop out of the Jefferson County, Colorado, schools are contacted during the summer and encouraged to return to school. Advisers, many of them retired school counselors, track down dropouts; about half eventually decide to give school another try. Of the dropouts who return to school in the fall, about 80 percent remain in school for the next school year.

Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship

By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

Objective 1

The academic performance of elementary and secondary students will increase significantly in every quartile, and the distribution of minority students in each level will more closely reflect the student population as a whole.

Action Needed

1. Community consensus on high aspiration levels for student performance developed in the context of state standards and national goals.
2. Systematic and continuing mechanisms to monitor and report on student performance developed in consultation with the community.
3. Community assessment comparing current performance levels for all students on a school-by-school basis.
4. Assessments that explicitly identify segments of the school population that do not attain the community's performance aspirations.

Objective 2

The percentage of students who demonstrate the ability to reason, solve problems, apply knowledge, and write and communicate effectively will increase substantially.

Action Needed

1. Monitoring student performance to provide longitudinal data that follows progress of the district and of all schools on academic capability (e.g., reasoning, problemsolving, application and communication of knowledge) and in all challenging subject matter.
2. Performance results reported to the community on a recurring and timely basis with particular emphasis on progress made over time.

Objective 3

All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship, community service, and personal responsibility.

Action Needed

1. Community recognition of expectations for student performance on citizenship and community involvement measures with consensus on high aspiration levels.
2. Systematic and recurring mechanisms to monitor and report on student performance developed in consultation with the community.
3. Community assessment comparing current performance levels for all students on a school-by-school basis.

Objective 4

The percentage of students who are competent in more than one language will substantially increase.

Action Needed

1. Appropriate foreign language proficiency assessment implemented for all schools.
2. Monitoring the foreign language curriculum to ascertain the sufficiency of offerings, the extent of student participation and performance, and any need for improvement.

Objective 5

All students will be knowledgeable about the diverse cultural heritage of this nation and about the world community.

Action Needed

1. Appropriate assessment of student understanding of our cultural heritage and of the world community.
2. Academic offerings and other educational opportunities provided and monitored to ascertain the depth of exposure, the extent of participation and understanding, and any need for improvement in these areas.

Examples of School Board's Role

Advocacy

- Assert commitment to high expectations.
- Develop aggressive programs to promote communitywide understanding of the essential value of a broad range of academic opportunity and high standards of performance.

Leadership

- Assume primary responsibility for meeting the objectives of this goal at the local level.
- Establish school system leadership on specifying, developing, monitoring, and sustaining high standards of performance in academic achievement and citizenship.
- Assert school system commitment to strengthening its own academic offerings through broader community involvement and making its academic resources available for community-based programs and activities.

Collaboration

- Develop understanding, appreciation, and use of school district academic resources by students and community.
- Convene community leadership to determine aspirations for the schools and students and to devise means to monitor progress toward attaining those standards.

In Minnesota. . .

The school board in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota, a town of 170 people located near the Canadian border, has worked with the community to launch a Northwestern Minnesota Global Studies Institute, a 4-year program in international affairs, economics, cultural studies, and foreign languages.

Students who enroll in the Institute during 9th or 10th grade major in either French, German, Russian, or Spanish. During their third year, they can add a second language. Half of each school day is devoted to studying the language and learning about the geography, economics, politics, music, and art of a particular area of the world. The other half of the day emphasizes math and science. During the summer between their junior and senior years, students will spend six weeks in a country that uses the language they have been studying. When they return to school, classes will be taught in the core language.

Goal 4: Science and Mathematics

By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

Objective 1

Math and science education will be strengthened throughout the system, especially in the early grades.

Action Needed

1. Monitoring of student performance across the range of science and mathematics offerings and other educational experiences to ascertain the depth of exposure, the extent of participation, and the level of knowledge and proficiency attained to identify any need for improvement in these areas.
2. Performance monitoring systems that provide longitudinal data on progress of the district and all schools in mathematics and science, with particular attention to ensuring that challenging subject matter is offered to all students and to determining the participation and success attained by women, members of minority populations, and those with differing levels of ability.
3. Regular and timely reporting of performance monitoring to the community, with particular emphasis on progress made over time.

Objective 2

The number of teachers with a substantive background in mathematics and science will increase by 50 percent.

Action Needed

1. Faculty recruitment, placement, and assessment programs that respond to needs for substantive competence in mathematics and the sciences.
2. Regular and systematic reporting on the substantive background and competence of school district science and mathematics faculties.

Objective 3

The number of U.S. undergraduates and graduate students, especially women and minorities, who complete degrees in mathematics, science, and engineering will increase significantly.

Action Needed

1. Appropriate mathematics and science proficiency assessments for all schools.
2. Recurrent monitoring of mathematics and science curricula to ascertain the sufficiency of offerings, the extent of student participation and performance, and any need for improvement.
3. Recruitment into science and mathematics courses of students usually underrepresented: women, minority group members, and those with differing levels of ability.

Examples of School Board's Role

Advocacy

- Develop aggressive programs to promote communitywide understanding of the essential value of extensive and inclusive student participation, high standards of performance, and high-level achievement.

Leadership

- Establish school system leadership on specifying, developing, monitoring, and sustaining high standards of instruction and student performance in the sciences and mathematics.
- Assert school system interest in strengthening its offerings in science and mathematics through broader community involvement and making its academic resources available for community-based programs and activities.
- Initiate a program to encourage girls and minorities to participate in science and mathematics throughout their elementary and secondary school years.

Collaboration

- Seek consultation and advice on science and mathematics programs from qualified members of local professional, technical, and business communities.
- Involve qualified community experts to supplement science and mathematics instruction in elementary and secondary schools.

In Buffalo, New York. . .

Many school districts have instituted science and mathematics magnet programs as a way of improving student performance in these two subject areas. The school board of Buffalo, New York, has gone a step further by building a school adjacent to the city's Museum of Science. The building houses the district's K–6 magnet school and also serves as the site for some classes for students in the 7th and 8th grade science magnet programs. The building centralizes the system's 8- year-old science magnet program for grades K–6, which previously operated at three different sites. Because of the proximity to the museum, students can take advantage of a variety of hands-on science activities every day (part of the educational philosophy of the school). School and museum facilities are open to the public during nonschool hours and during the summer.

Goal 5: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning

By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Objective 1

Every major American business will be involved in strengthening the connection between education and work.

Action Needed

1. School, business, and community initiatives to create and sustain joint programs connecting education and work.

Objective 2

All workers will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills, from basic to highly technical, needed to adapt to emerging new technologies, work methods, and markets through public and private educational, vocational, technical, workplace, or other programs.

Action Needed

1. Performance monitoring systems that provide longitudinal data on community progress on literacy and on the knowledge and skills needed to compete globally and fulfill responsibilities of citizenship.
2. Regular and timely reporting to the community, with particular emphasis on progress over time.

Objective 3

The number of quality programs, including those at libraries, that are designed to serve more effectively the needs of the growing number of part-time and mid-career students will increase substantially.

Action Needed

1. Appropriate assessment programs conducted to measure student and community literacy.
2. Comprehensive programs to develop technical and vocational skills with emphasis on preparing those in or about to enter the active work force.
3. Curricula monitoring to ascertain sufficiency of offerings in these areas and need for improvement.

Objective 4

The proportion of those qualified students, especially minorities, who enter college; who complete at least two years; and who complete their degree programs will increase substantially.

Action Needed

1. Appropriate assessment to determine extent of understanding in technical, vocational, and work force readiness.
2. Recurrent monitoring of all education experiences to ascertain the sufficiency of exposure, the extent of student participation and understanding, and any need for improvement in these areas.

Objective 5

The proportion of college graduates who demonstrate an advanced ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and solve problems will increase substantially.

Action Needed

1. Monitoring to provide longitudinal data on progress of district and all schools on literacy and competencies in technological, vocational, and work force readiness areas, with emphasis on challenging subject matter and extent of participation and success attained by women, members of minority populations, and those with differing levels of ability.
2. Regular and timely reporting, with particular emphasis on progress over time.

Examples of School Board's Role

Advocacy

- Develop aggressive programs to promote communitywide understanding of the essential value of universal literacy and of the qualifications for technical and vocational competence and responsible citizenship.

Leadership

- Assert school system commitment to strengthening programs for literacy, vocational and technical education, work force readiness, and programs to stimulate and support responsible citizenship.

Collaboration

- Develop an understanding, appreciation, and use of school district facilities and programs and of other community resources, especially public libraries, by students and the community.

Goal 6: Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools

By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

Objective 1

Every school will implement a firm and fair policy on use, possession, and distribution of drugs and alcohol.

Action Needed

1. Providing longitudinal data to monitor progress of the district and of all schools with respect to the incidence of offenses involving violence or the possession or use of controlled or prohibited substances.
2. Recurrent performance monitoring results reported to the community, emphasizing progress over time.

Objective 2

Parents, businesses, and community organizations will work together to ensure that the schools are a safe haven for all children.

Action Needed

1. Appropriate assessment implemented to determine the extent of violent behavior or use of controlled or prohibited substances in schools.
2. Recurrent monitoring and analysis of school discipline reports and other appropriate records to ascertain the extent of student involvement in these areas of concern and the need for improvement in these areas.

Objective 3

Every school district will develop a comprehensive K-12 drug and alcohol prevention education program. Drug and alcohol curriculum should be taught as an integral part of health education. In addition, community-based teams should be organized to provide students and teachers with needed support.

Action Needed

1. Developing a school system monitoring system that provides both current and longitudinal data to identify the range and scope of drug and alcohol prevention education programs to monitor progress of the district and of all schools with respect to curriculum offerings and community involvement.
2. Recurrent performance monitoring results reported to the community, emphasizing progress over time.

Examples of School Board's Role

Advocacy

- Assert aggressive and enduring school system commitment to safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools.

Leadership

- Establish policies and develop aggressive programs to promote safety and a disciplined environment as the foundation for academic opportunity, educational achievement, and the attainment of high standards of performance.
- Develop effective means to ensure communitywide understanding of the school district's concern for safety and a disciplined environment as the foundation for all school endeavors.

Collaboration

- Develop effective working relationships with others in the community with responsibility or concern for these areas, particularly law enforcement and juvenile justice agencies, to develop a common understanding, appreciation, and use of all appropriate resources to ensure safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools.

In Burlington, Iowa. . .

In Burlington, Iowa, the school board is an active participant in a community prevention task force known as GRADE A PLUS (Great River Alcohol and Drug Education Alliance—Parents Linking in United Support). Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, the school district, and other community agencies, the project brought together more than 50 people for a weekend training session designed to help identify community needs and develop a series of education, early intervention, treatment, and after-care programs that will help the community's youth avoid drug abuse.

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